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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
Multi-stakeholder dialogue segment

Multi-stakeholder dialogue segment

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum**

Dialogue paper by local authorities***

Implementing sustainable development: proposals by local governments

1. Local governments and civic leaders are committed to playing a positive and meaningful role in the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to working to create sustainable cities and communities. Significant movement towards sustainability has occurred at the local level in those places where local governments have acted on the goals and targets outlined in Agenda 21, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) conventions, the Habitat Agenda and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. It is of vital importance to recognize and tap this great potential for accelerated implementation of sustainable development.

2. The outcomes of the Summit must recognize the importance of:

(a) Good local governance in creating sustainable communities;

(b) Urban dimension of sustainable development and the interdependence of urban and rural areas;

(c) Role of local governments in developing partnerships for sustainable development;

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(d) Working with national Governments, international agencies and civil society;

(e) Opportunities to promote and encourage diversified action at the local level.

I. Future priorities and recommendations for action

Governance

3. The role of local governments in governance for sustainable development and good governance at the local level needs to be enhanced and promoted by:

(a) Further strengthening local authorities as agreed in the Habitat Agenda; empowering them to play a more effective role in local sustainable human settlements development through appropriate decentralization of responsibilities and resources and increasing local participation, in conformity with the legal framework and policies of each country;

(b) Engaging and assisting local and subnational authorities in action strategies for sustainable development and for the fulfilment of international commitments in order to build upon local sustainable development successes in the past decade;

(c) Providing international and national support for programmes and partnerships to develop the capacity of cities and local authorities and their networks to deliver more effective sustainable development outcomes.

Poverty eradication

4. The following actions are recommended:

(a) Promote local government's awareness of and active commitment to the international development targets set out in the Millennium Declaration through the organization of a worldwide millennium towns and cities campaign, in partnership with the appropriate United Nations agencies;

(b) Strengthen the capacity (both competencies and resources) of communities to ensure that urban and rural poverty is addressed through integrated local development strategies;

(c) Support local-level and community-based participatory planning processes (local Agenda 21s) which provide a voice for poor people, women and other marginalized groups and which develop viable local economies through the promotion of local production and marketing of local products and services so as to support community-based entrepreneurship and job creation.

Capacity-building

5. The following actions are recommended:

(a) Build the capacity of local government to foster good local governance and sustainable development at the local level, through demand-led international support programmes and a partnership and policy dialogue between donors and local government;

(b) National Governments should work with local governments and their associations in order to strengthen local government's capacity, competencies and resources (including local leadership development);

(c) Develop and promote city-to-city/municipal international cooperation as an effective tool for exchange of good practice, learning, development and capacity-building.

Global strategies for the future

6. The local government dialogue paper endorsed by the local government sector and submitted to the Commission acting as the preparatory committee at its second session describes progress achieved by local governments since UNCED and identifies barriers to sustainable development. The following five strategies for joint action by all spheres of government to accelerate sustainable development were identified and elaborated:

(a) Strengthen local government;

(b) Strengthen intergovernmental and intra-governmental cooperation;

(c) Foster international solidarity and cooperation;

(d) Build a new culture of sustainability;

(e) Accelerate the transition to sustainable communities and cities.

7. A local government declaration is currently under review to be endorsed by local government leaders around the world at the Summit. Building on the five strategies above, the declaration sets out key principles,

commitments from local governments, and requests to international associations of cities and local authorities, national Governments, the United Nations and the international community.

II. Partnerships for action at the local, national and international levels

8. Local governments contribute to partnerships with their unique ability to facilitate the participation of multiple local stakeholders and to implement policies and programmes which are appropriate to local contexts.

9. The following actions are recommended:

(a) Involve local governments as equal partners in action-oriented national sustainable development strategies;

(b) Involve local government as an equal partner in the United Nations system and acknowledge its unique role as a sphere of government, through the enhancement of such initiatives as the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities;

(c) Recognize and support international campaigns of local and subnational governments aimed at building healthy, sustainable and resilient communities as effective mechanisms to meet commitments of international conventions and to protect global common goods, such as:

(i) Local Agenda 21s: establish long-term national campaigns to initiate and promote local-level sustainable development participatory planning processes (such as local Agenda 21s) with mechanisms to ensure action plan implementation, such as formal linkages with annual municipal budgeting and statutory planning activities;

(ii) Local action 21s: develop specific strategies to support expanded and accelerated implementation in the over 6,000 communities which have already undertaken local Agenda 21 processes. Introduce criteria for investment programmes that consider the strategies and targets of action plans in the selection and design of projects for support;

(iii) Climate protection: support local government action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency, which will assist national Governments' efforts to meet Kyoto Protocol targets, through the implementation and expansion of the international Cities for Climate Protection Campaign;

(iv) Sustainable water use: support local government action towards integrated water resource management by launching an international programme to facilitate the creation and implementation of national and local water management plans aimed at defining, monitoring and reporting on national and local targets to eliminate overuse, pollution and water loss;

(v) Sustainable patterns of consumption and production: set up action plans for sound public procurement at all levels of government that factor into procurement decision-making, the quality of goods and services, the costs and impacts over the lifecycle of a product, and the principles of equity and sustainability. Establish national collective procurement mechanisms in order to create more effective public demand for sustainable products;

(vi) Management and prevention of disasters (natural and other): develop local management capacity to create more resilient communities and cities through delivery of training programmes in every municipality. Undertake risk analysis and management of cities to identify risk-prone buildings and infrastructure, systematically reducing their vulnerability to create more resilient living environments.

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Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum**

Dialogue paper by trade unions***

Framework for action: trade union priorities for the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Framework for action: general aims

1. Trade unions propose a framework for action based on the central themes of Agenda 21,[1] as developed since Rio. Our proposals for the World Summit on Sustainable Development presuppose an expanded role for trade unions and other major groups, in partnership with each other, Governments and international agencies. We believe that the Summit will achieve its goals if it is able to mobilize all stakeholders within a framework for action based on the following general aims:

(a) Implementation of principles 1, 3, 5, 8, 20, 21 and 25 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[2] which establishes human beings at the centre of sustainable development;

(b) Full integration of the three "dimensions" of sustainable development, in all development decisions, particularly the social dimension, as it is a prerequisite to gaining the widespread consensus necessary to support required changes;

(c) A focus on employment and dignified work as a means of promoting equality and eradicating poverty;

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(d) Full recognition of the rights of all stakeholders to participate in decision-making, including workers and trade unions, as outlined in chapter 29 of Agenda 21.

Framework for action: partnerships for action

2. Based on experience since Rio, we propose that the World Summit on Sustainable Development promote a variety of partnerships and capacity-building initiatives that involve workers and trade unions in:

(a) Employment and equity alliances to resolve poverty, equity and access issues raised by all major groups, and requiring the cooperation of business and private institutions, local authorities and Governments to achieve full integration in economic and environmental policy. Extensive changes required in current patterns call for a better understanding of social and employment impacts, and the subsequent development of effective and just transition measures;

(b) Work-based partnerships for sustainable development based on collective agreements as best practice models for action on sustainable development issues relating to work and production. These may take the form of "voluntary agreements", of which thousands already exist, including worldwide "framework agreements" in some of the largest multinational corporations, as well as joint projects, institutions and processes for consultation and cooperation to:

- Improve and clean up production, as a means of promoting worker and public-health as well as environmental protection;
- Meet agreed government targets for sustainable development;
- Establish verification tools for voluntary agreements and government regulation;
- Develop and conduct sustainability impact assessments;
- Develop effective links between production and consumption, through verifiable eco-labels and other workplace-based instruments;

(c) Capacity-building partnerships for effective change to predict impacts, interpret implications, and devise transition plans in an integrated way, to include:

- Research, analysis, and tool development partnerships to better understand and respond to social and employment implications of change. Trade unions want to work with scientific, technological and academic groups, as well as among intergovernmental bodies and community-based research groups on work-based partnerships that incorporate data-gathering, information feedback systems, piloting and development with technical expertise to produce social indicators, impact assessments and tools that can be used in the implementation of programmes;
- Training and education partnerships to build the capacity of workers, employers and trade unions for environmental and economic planning for transition to sustainable development. With our network of 165 million members on over 2 million work sites and our tradition of joint workplace education and action, trade unions have much to offer in this area. We seek partnerships with education institutions, government, and intergovernmental agencies to promote training and education, in the context of joint workplace information and feedback systems;

(d) Public policy and action partnerships to effectively expand multi-stakeholder activity at all levels. This is needed to achieve agreement and support of entire communities for policies and financial measures designed to promote the level of change that is required. This requires:

- An active role for government to provide regulatory systems, including inspections and enforcement, as well as to ensure equitable provision of such essential services as water, sanitation, and infrastructure. Local authorities, in particular, must be given the necessary resources to promote participatory activity in the workplace and the community;
- Incorporation of sustainable development goals into trade, investment and governance decisions, with priority given to the social impacts of policies, practices and agreements governing trade, investment, financial decision-making and corporate accountability;

(e) Rights partnerships to give full effect to the rights-based approach of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and to ensure attention

to such issues as: the precautionary principle, corporate accountability, freedom to information, and full participation in environmental decision-making of all affected groups, including workers in workplaces. This requires an expanded role for agencies and instruments of global governance, for example, the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *Guidelines for Multinational Corporations*,[3] and the Global Compact; such international achievements as the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, the Global Reporting Initiative, and the World Summit for Social Development itself; multi-stakeholder dialogue and action; and reliance on tripartite structures such as those within ILO.

Framework for action: specific action proposals

3. This framework for action can be readily translated into specific proposals for action, based on the unique capacity, structure and objectives of each major group, cooperating with other groups, Governments and international agencies. In this spirit of partnership, trade unions will commit themselves to:

- Undertake initiatives with OECD, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), ILO, the European Union (EU) etc. to research social and employment impacts of change (for example, climate change measures), as well as for increased financial/technical assistance to allow developing countries to fashion their own solutions;
- Seek new ways to adapt successful workplace structures and processes to broader social problems and applications, for example, joint work-site committees and assessment models;
- Increase participation by trade unions in all regions and at all levels, in the sustainable development process, including multi-stakeholder processes, and partnerships for change;
- Undertake education to increase awareness and use of such instruments as the ILO conventions, and the OECD *Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*;
- Undertake initiatives to promote consensus on the need for public ownership and control of such vital human services as water, sanitation, health and welfare;
- Launch new initiatives to link occupational health and safety to public health, as a means to significantly reduce deaths, injury and disease;
- Launch a "universal sustainable development label" to signify products or services produced in sustainable workplaces and consistent with sustainable development to promote closer links between workplace principles of action and consumer behaviour;
- Promote round-table meetings on a sectoral basis, devoted to the building of partnerships and agreements among major groups, Governments and international agencies;
- Expand on existing framework agreements to promote voluntary agreements on a sectoral, a regional and an international basis;
- Take steps to increase trade union participation in Local Agenda 21 groups to fully utilize the unique capacity of local authorities and encourage closer cooperation among the workplace, the community and domestic life;
- Launch programmes to utilize workers and trade unions as "watchdogs" and public educators in the workplace and community on sustainable development issues;
- Take steps to expand international cooperation between unions to share capacity wherever it is needed to promote sustainable development.

4. In addition to pursuing the above, trade unions[4] are committed to supporting proposals and action plans put forward by other major groups, Governments and international agencies.

Notes

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Ibid., annex I.

[3] Text available at http://www.oecd.org/daf/investment/guidelines/

[4] Trade unions are represented by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to OECD and the International Trade Secretariats (ITS). For more information, see the trade union position paper entitled *Fashioning a New Deal* on the ICFTU web site at http://www.icftu.org or contact Lucien Royer at +331.5537.3737.

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Addendum**

Dialogue paper by business and industry***

Introduction

1. To ensure a structured and productive participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development, ICC and WBCSD are helping business organizations around the world to come together under the common theme of "Business action for sustainable development" (see www.basd-action.net). Business aims to conduct a dialogue with Governments and other stakeholders participating in the Summit process and to integrate into the discussion a constructive analysis of the global business community's achievements and its continuing role in delivering sustainable development solutions.

Partnerships and type two initiatives

2. Business solutions for sustainable development focus on concrete actions and deliverable results rather than process and procedures. Partnerships between and among stakeholders often deliver more effective and practical solutions than in isolation. Public-private partnerships are also an effective delivery vehicle for capacity-building, transfer of technology and the linkage of official development assistance and foreign direct investment.

3. A recent report, "Putting partnering to work", released by Business Partners for Development, describes "tri-sector partnering", or strategic alliances for managing social issues, which capitalize on the

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***The present paper is intended to contribute to a constructive multi-stakeholder dialogue, and does not necessarily represent all the views of every partner organization and/or its constitutents; the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) (www.iccwbo.org) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) (www.wbscd.org) acknowledge the input and assistance provided by their members and other cooperating institutes and associations; the views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

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expertise and experience of organizations from across business, government and civil society. For example, a partnership can benefit from the project management and logistical expertise of the investing company, the strategic coordination and the ability to source funding of public services of the local government and the capacity to mobilize community participation of local NGOs and community groups.

4. United Kingdom Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, commented at the launch of the above-mentioned report that no one government or organization can afford to work in isolation. She noted that we need to recognize the different strengths and capabilities different organizations have and build partnerships and networks at the national and international levels which make the most of those different strengths.

5. World Bank President, James D. Wolfensohn, added that this is new territory, a new way of thinking, and he expressed the hope that we can engage business in the new approach as well because the currency of community development is not just money but knowledge and experience.

6. The challenge is to link "type two" partnership initiatives to Agenda 21 and the millennium development goals, and to ensure that type two initiatives support, strengthen and implement the "type one" process, agreements and outcomes of the Summit.

7. Business views the following guidelines as necessary ingredients to ensure effective partnerships:

- Include an appreciation of the three pillars of sustainable development — economic progress, environmental protection and social responsibility;
- Involve a combination of partners drawn from Governments, NGOs, business and other civil society groups, recognizing the importance of participation and partnership with other groups;
- Pursue and demonstrate credible, measurable results and/or impacts, with milestones and transparency;
- To have the greatest impact, it is desirable for projects to be replicable, transferable and inspirational — practical examples to be adapted and emulated elsewhere.

8. Organizations involved in partnerships are invited to submit, via the business action for sustainable development web site, details of suitable projects and initiatives, using the on-line facility at: http://www.basd-action.net/initiatives/index.php.

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Addendum**

Dialogue paper by scientific and technological communities***

Science and technology as a foundation for sustainable development

Why is science and technology essential for sustainable development?

1. Sustainable development is probably the most daunting challenge that humanity has ever faced, and achieving it requires that the fundamental issues be addressed immediately at the local, regional and global levels. At all scales, the role of science and technology is crucial; scientific knowledge and appropriate technologies are central to resolving the economic, social and environmental problems that make current development paths unsustainable. Bridging the development gap between the North and the South and alleviating poverty to provide a more equitable and sustainable future for all, requires novel integrated approaches that fully incorporate existing and new scientific knowledge. The scientific and technological community can make a leading contribution to tackling the major problems identified in sections III and V of the Millennium Report of the Secretary-General (A/54/2000), "Freedom from want" and "Sustaining our future". Those issues include: (a) fighting against disease; (b) population growth and urbanization; (c) the digital/information divide; (d) coping with climate change; (e) confronting the water crisis; (f) defending

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the soil; (g) preserving forests, fisheries and biodiversity and (h) building a new ethic of global stewardship. Whatever the cultural, geographical, socio-economic and environmental setting, a strong partnership between the scientific and technological community and other members of civil society, the private sector and Governments is a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable development.

How can the various scientific and technological communities improve their contributions to sustainable development?

2. Implementing Agenda 21 during the next decade and beyond will build on progress made during the past 10 years in generating knowledge targeted to sustainable development objectives and in developing cleaner and more affordable technologies. However, enhancing the scientific and technological community's capacity to contribute to sustainable development will require significant changes. The scientific and technological community is committed to implementing necessary changes and developing appropriate partnerships. Those changes include:

(a) *More policy relevant science.* A much greater share of research must integrate problem-oriented and interdisciplinary research that addresses the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development. Good science is essential for good governance;

(b) *Broad-based, participatory approaches.* Traditional divides between the natural, social, economic and engineering sciences and other major stakeholders must be bridged. Research agendas must be defined through broad-based, participatory approaches involving those in need of scientific information. The scientific and technological community accepts its responsibility to improve cooperation with other parts of civil society, the private sector, Governments and intergovernmental bodies;

(c) *Promoting gender equality in science.* Historically, women have been severely underrepresented in science. The scientific and technological community will actively promote gender equality in science and work with women and organizations (e.g., Third World Organization for Women in Science) to eliminate existing barriers.

New contract between science and technology and society for sustainable development

3. The basic changes outlined above are essential for redirecting the present global scientific and technological system towards the sustainable development challenge. However, it is now clearer than ever that that challenge has so far outstripped the capacities both of the scientific and technological community and of society to forge effective and comprehensive responses. Nothing less than a new contract between the scientific and technological community and society is required.

4. The following are crucial components of such a new contract:

(a) *Improving education and capacity-building.* Enhanced science teaching at both the primary and secondary levels is central to scientific and technological capacity-building and to a better public understanding of sustainable development issues. A further target should be to increase the percentage of university-level students enrolled in science, mathematics and engineering. Current enrolments are decreasing in most developed and developing countries. Three core components are critical in enhancing capacity: skilled individuals, efficient institutions and active networks. Capacity-building at the international, regional and subregional levels must be given increased attention since it is often the most cost-efficient way to build a critical mass of scientific and technological capacity;

(b) *Bridging the North-South divide in scientific and technological capacity.* Although it is necessary to build and enhance strong scientific and technological capacity in all regions of the world, that need is particularly pressing in developing countries. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries spend more annually on research and development than the economic output of the world's 61 least developed countries. Developed countries employ 12 times the per capita number of scientists and engineers in research and development than developing countries, where there is woefully weak institutional scientific and technological capacity. Ten years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, that challenge remains a major obstacle to sustainable development. Developing countries must address that problem and enhance significantly investment in higher education

and scientific and technological capacity. The developed countries must accept their responsibility for much improved knowledge and technology-sharing. Bilateral donors and other funding mechanisms should substantially increase the funds they allocate to science and technology for sustainable development, especially in the area of scientific and technological capacity-building;

(c) *Clean technologies and sustainable production and consumption patterns.* The public and private funding of science and technology, in developed and developing countries alike, must focus on developing new clean technologies and supporting sustainable production systems and consumption patterns. There should also be improved international sharing and local adaptation of clean and/or traditional technologies. In many instances, traditional technologies offer viable solutions. Due emphasis should be placed, whenever appropriate, on local, culturally adapted and low-cost technologies;

(d) *Governance for sustainable development.* Governance systems for sustainable development at the local, national, regional and global levels must incorporate the best available scientific and technological knowledge. The link between the scientific and technological community and decision-making is poorly supported by current institutional structures. Existing governance institutions and institutional mechanisms need to be transformed in ways which ensure scientific and technological input; if necessary, new mechanisms should be developed to meet that explicit goal. The tool of integrated scientific and technological assessments needs to be bolstered and enhanced at the national, regional and global levels. It is proposed that a formal link be established between the Commission on Sustainable Development and the organizing partners of the multi-stakeholder dialogue segment for the scientific and technological community (ICSU and WFEO), for example through a scientific and technological advisory panel, which would be a mechanism to ensure that the Commission can draw upon independent scientific and technological expertise and advice;

(e) *Long-term perspectives and data needs.* The scientific and technological community has a responsibility to provide the knowledge and technologies that will enable a long-term sustainable future. To that end, a basic requisite will be to establish long-term monitoring systems for collecting reliable scientific, socio-economic and other societal data. Those systems must permit the integration of all relevant data sets for addressing crucial sustainability issues. The global environmental observation systems need to be made fully operational, which requires governmental funding. Full and open access to scientific information data must be ensured;

(f) *Augmenting financial resources for science and technology for sustainable development.* Current levels of investment in science and technology for sustainable development are far too low in both developed and developing countries. That is true both with respect to the scope of the problems and with respect to the promising rate of return on scientific and technological investments. Larger investments in science and technology should be seen primarily as increased investment in a country's socio-economic development and in preserving natural life-support systems for current and future generations, rather than simply as research expenditures. For that reason, public sector funding for scientific and technological activities targeted on sustainable development goals should be augmented significantly in both the North and the South. The private sector should reorient its scientific and technological investments in a manner that integrates sustainable development objectives and should increase its scientific and technological investments generally. Strategic partnerships should be forged between the public and private scientific and technological sectors at the national and regional levels.

Specific new partnership initiatives

The scientific and technological community has taken the initiative to launch several new partnership initiatives geared towards implementing important recommendations in a number of Agenda 21 chapters. The participation of other partners is sought in those initiatives, as appropriate. In particular:

- *Science and technology for sustainable development.* The current global change

programmes[1] provide an important platform for the development of scientific endeavours addressing key issues related to sustainable development. Within the next few years, initiatives will be launched that address all three pillars of sustainable development in a more integrated way. The aim is to develop such interdisciplinary science programmes to address key sustainable development issues in a participatory fashion, engaging other dialogue partners as well as the engineering community;

- *International scientific and technological capacity-building.* Several capacity-building programmes will be launched with various partners. Examples of specific initiatives include: (a) a capacity-building programme for addressing crucial freshwater problems. Training activities will range from relevant basic sciences to training in interdisciplinary approaches; including the social sciences. The lead partners are UNESCO, ICSU and TWAS; (b) an initiative on mathematics and science teaching based on current ICSU-IAP collaboration. The involvement of youth and labour unions major groups will be sought; (c) a decadal plan for capacity-building for global change science,[2] calling for support of a broad-based capacity-building programme in global change research for developing countries;

- *The Role of Food Security in Sustainable Development.* Food security is an essential component of sustainable development, especially for developing countries. ICSU will launch a global environmental change and food systems programme. Possible partners include IAP, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the farmers and women major groups;

- *Health as an integral component of sustainable development.* Major research initiatives are already under way to address the scourge of infectious diseases that is the major cause of morbidity and premature mortality in developing countries. The scientific and technological community is fully committed to these initiatives. In addition, the scientific and technological community is committed to the integrating human health research with all three pillars of sustainable development. For example, ICSU global change programmes are initiating a partnership with the World Health Organization and the Inter-Academy Medical Panel focused on environment and health;

- *Blending traditional and scientific knowledge for sustainable development.* ICSU and UNESCO, in collaboration with the indigenous people and business and industry major groups, will develop a new initiative for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources based on traditional knowledge. TWAS activities on indigenous medicinal and food plants could provide additional links to the scientific and technological community in developing countries. Planning of activities and targets to be achieved will initially be for five years;

- *Demonstrating applications of the global environmental observing systems.* ICSU, its relevant interdisciplinary programmes, UNESCO and the other United Nations system agencies are co-sponsoring the Global Observing System. The focus should now be on making that system operational and the applications of the global environmental observing systems for enhancing integrated approaches to sustainable natural resource management.

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[1] DIVERSITAS (sponsored by ICSU and three of its subsidiary bodies plus the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)); the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme: A Study of Global Change (ICSU); the International Human Dimensions Programme (ICSU and ISSC); and the World Climate Research Programme (ICSU, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the World Meteorological Organization).

[2] The International START Secretariat (the Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training) of International Geosphere Biosphere Programme (IGBP), IHDP and World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), the International Foundation for Science and the Third World Academy of Sciences.

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Dialogue paper by farmers' organizations***

Implementing sustainable development: proposals by farmers

Increasing resources for rural development and sustainable agriculture

1. Agriculture is directly linked to implementing many principles of Agenda 21, including poverty eradication, sustainable consumption and production, management of natural resources, energy, freshwater, health, education, trade and market access, as well as technology transfer and capacity-building. It is therefore essential to stop the drain of resources away from agriculture, whether it be from national budgets or from international development funds. Sustainable agriculture, rural development and agricultural research should be given the priority that they so badly need to achieve the United Nations targets to reduce by half the number of people living in poverty.

Strengthening participatory decision-making processes

2. Implementation would be strengthened if all levels of government created the necessary framework for multi-stakeholder participation processes. Sustainable development policies would be more efficient and successful if all stakeholders were involved and committed through a bottom-up decision-making approach. A proper policy development can only be achieved if the people who make practical decisions are involved in decisions about how to use

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resources in a wise and sustainable way. It is important to package sustainable development not as a demand or imposition of society on farmers, for which farmers would bear the cost, but as a necessity and methodology to also sustain the welfare and incomes of farmers.

3. For that purpose, effective partnerships among stakeholders must be built. However, effective partnerships are partnerships among equals, and today farmers are unequal players. The involvement of vulnerable groups, such as women, in decision-making processes is very important. They are often insufficiently represented in the working groups that draw up regional plans. Women need to have access to rights and entitlements.

4. It is important to stress that the multi-stakeholder process needs to strictly limit the participation to the direct community of interest. However, it can also give a say to people from outside the community who do not bear any cost of the resulting policies or negotiations.

Increasing market access to farmers

5. In the context of the globalization of the food market, farmers in developing countries need to improve access to their own local markets. Development aid programmes must be conducted accordingly. Creating a level playing field in the global marketplace will provide the necessary incentives and leeway for farmers, especially small farmers, to adopt environmentally friendly farming practices, thus avoiding their desperate acts of survival at the expense of sustainable development due to distortions in international trade.

Partnerships

6. *Food security*. Food security must be one of the priorities of the World Summit for Sustainable Development. In order to achieve food security, farmers need policies that focus on access to land and secure land tenure arrangements, access to water and secure water rights, access to genetic resources and access to credit at prices that they can afford.

7. *Access to natural resources*. Natural resources must be accessible to the poor, which in the farm sector means secure rights to land, water and genetic resources, for which there is a need to develop public-private partnerships. However, the public sector must remain the custodian of natural resources. Integrated management of natural resources, including river basin and watershed strategies, involving all stakeholders and users from the grass-roots level in decision-making processes, as well as protecting and recognizing the indigenous knowledge, is essential.

8. *Governance*. The mainstreaming of sustainable agriculture has yet to be attained. Many countries lack an institutional and policy framework that functions effectively to support sustainable development. The absence of basic institutional framework and policy incentives is a major impediment to the economic survival of family farms. Investment for integrated rural development plans (economic and social infrastructure, enterprise development, capacity-building for local governance) should be enhanced, in partnership with local authorities, farmers' organizations and the private and public sector.

9. *Capacity-building*. Many farmers are still not organized well enough to be able to participate as effective partners in sustainable development and its implementation, or their Governments are still not very open to such participation. More resources need to be put by national and local authorities into enhancing the capacity of farmers' organizations to contribute to self-help development and establishing stakeholder consultation processes.

10. *Technical assistance*. The implementation of sustainable development would also benefit from more effective partnerships to strengthen the knowledge base and improve the dissemination of information and knowledge through farm-to-farm technical assistance programmes, for example. Public-private partnerships could be envisaged in basic sustainable agricultural techniques.

11. *Research and development*. The public sector has the responsibility to continue to do basic research and enhance partnerships between farmers and the scientific community to work on specific issues, such as renewable energy sources, the fight against desertification and its negative effects, biotechnologies and the protection of biodiversity, and the recycling of nitrogen and phosphorous from towns and cities back to agriculture. Public funding for research therefore needs to be increased in order to find solutions to those issues. Cooperation with indigenous populations is essential in terms of using adequate technologies in accordance with their traditional knowledge.

12. *International organizations*:

(a) *Establishing a capacity-building fund.* The United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, working with major groups, should set up in each region a capacity-building fund for major groups. That is essential to strengthen the ability of farmers and other major groups to take more responsibility for sustainable development in their sector. Arrangements for accountability and equitable distribution are a prerequisite for the development of such funds;

(b) *Providing institutional framework.* The United Nations should consolidate the multi-stakeholder dialogues by establishing an institutional structure to facilitate the building of partnerships among major groups and with Governments for strengthening the implementation of Agenda 21. That structure should ensure that national Governments work effectively and in a transparent way with the representative organizations of the "major groups", such as the farmers group, within their respective countries;

(c) *A resolution on peace and stability.* Sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace and stability. We therefore call upon the United Nations to pass a resolution to support "partnerships for peace" both within and between major groups. The resolution would state that, even in parts of the world where Governments are in conflict, civil society organizations should not be prevented from meeting and cooperating if they wish to do so.